

EDCs and Breast Cancer

breast
cancer uk.

What are EDCs?

Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs) can disrupt your endocrine system which manages hormones in the body. Our hormones are chemical messengers that control many important bodily functions.

EDCs can interfere with hormones in a few ways. Some can trick the body into thinking they are the natural hormone. Others can block hormones from working or alter their production. This can lead to health issues.



Why does it matter?

EDCs can affect many hormones in your body including the female sex hormone oestrogen. High levels of oestrogen are known to increase your breast cancer risk.

Some EDCs can mimic the normal actions of oestrogen, which is why they have been linked with an increased risk of breast cancer.

You are exposed to EDCs every day, in your home, garden, workplace and the wider environment.



How do we get exposed?

By understanding where you find EDCs, you can reduce your exposure. EDCs can enter and build up in your body from:



Ingestion



Inhalation



Skin absorption





But where are EDCs?



PFAS (forever chemicals)	Found in non-stick cookware, takeaway boxes and waterproof clothing.
Bisphenols (BPA or BPS)	Found in some hard plastics and linings of canned food.
Pesticides (glyphosate)	Used as weedkillers, insecticides and fungicides.
Parabens	Used as preservatives in cosmetics and hygiene products.
Phthalates	Used in fragrances in perfumes and cosmetics and as plasticisers in soft plastics.
Flame retardants	Found in sofas, mattresses, and other furnishings.

How to reduce your exposure to EDCs



Use fewer (or safer) cosmetics: check labels for EDCs, such as parabens.



Choose fragrance-free products, as fragrance or parfum may contain EDCs such as phthalates.



Use less plastic for food storage; instead use glass, ceramic or stainless-steel containers which are less likely to contain EDCs.



Eat less processed, canned and take-away food to reduce EDC exposures from food packaging.



Don't microwave food or drink in plastic containers as EDCs leach into food and drink more easily when plastic is heated.



Eat organic if you can, as it contains less pesticide residue.



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